

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

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1 1. A method for providing electronic coupons, comprising the steps of:
2 receiving coupon information for at least one item along with a
3 broadcast of a program;
4 enabling selection of one of a plurality of display modes, wherein the
5 plurality of display modes comprises a coupon mode;
6 alerting a viewer when the coupon information is available in the
7 coupon mode when the coupon mode is selected; and
8 displaying the coupon information on a display along with the
9 broadcast of a program.

1 2. The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:
2 providing the broadcast of a program;
3 providing the coupon information for the at least one item;
4 transmitting the coupon information along with the program data; and
5 storing the received coupon information.

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1 3. The method of claim 2, further comprising the steps of:
2 providing the coupon information on at least one smart card;
3 providing the at least one smart card to a viewer;

4 synchronizing the coupon information with the broadcast of a program
5 upon receipt of the broadcast of a program.

1 4. The method of claim 1, wherein the broadcast of a program is provided
2 using a high-definition television system.

1 5. The method of claim 1, wherein the plurality of display modes further
2 comprises a non-coupon mode and a stored coupon mode.

1 6. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of alerting comprises
2 providing at least one alert to a viewer when at least one coupon is available,
3 wherein the at least one alert comprises a tone and at least one displayed
4 mark.

1 7. The method of claim 6, wherein the at least one displayed mark is
2 superimposed over the broadcast of a program on the display.

1 8. The method of claim 6, wherein the at least one displayed mark
2 comprises a coupon indicator for each coupon available.

1 9. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of requesting the
2 coupon information, wherein the step of requesting comprises selecting a
3 coupon indicator corresponding to an item in which the viewer is interested,

4 wherein selecting the coupon indicator results in the display of detailed
5 coupon information.

1 10. The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:
2 storing selected coupon data on a removable recording medium; and
3 storing data corresponding to the television program on the removable
4 recording medium, wherein the data corresponding to the program
5 comprises a program title, a program description, a date of airing, a time of
6 airing, and a channel of airing.

1 11. The method of claim 10, wherein the coupon data comprises the data
2 corresponding to the program.

1 12. The method of claim 10, further comprising the steps of:
2 reading the coupon information from the removable recording
3 medium;
4 reading the data corresponding to the program from the removable
5 recording medium;
6 transferring the data corresponding to the program to a collection
7 center for statistical programming data; and
8 redeeming a value of the coupon information.

1 13. The method of claim 10, further comprising the step of satisfying at
2 least one condition prior to storing selected coupon data on a removable
3 recording medium.

1 14. The method of claim 12, further comprising the step of determining
2 whether the at least one condition is satisfied before allowing the reading of
3 the coupon information.

1 15. The method of claim 12, wherein the step of reading the coupon
2 information comprises reading the coupon information using an electronic
3 link established with at least one dealer, wherein the electronic link allows
4 the at least one dealer to read the coupon information from the removable
5 recording medium at such time as the viewer electronically purchases the at
6 least one item.

1 16. The method of claim 5, wherein the stored coupon mode causes all of
2 the coupon information for the program to be stored, wherein the stored
3 coupon information is recalled and viewed at a time that is different from a
4 broadcast time of the coupon information.

1 17. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of displaying comprises
2 superimposing the coupon information over the program data on the
3 display.

1 18. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of displaying comprises
2 displaying the coupon information on a portion of the display, wherein the
3 portion of the display is selectable by a viewer.

1 19. The method of claim 1, wherein the coupon information is received
2 simultaneously with the broadcast of a program.

1 20. The method of claim 1, wherein the coupon information is received
2 prior to receiving the broadcast of a program, wherein the prior received
3 coupon information is stored.

1 21. The method of claim 20, further comprising the step of receiving
2 timing data that links the coupon information to the corresponding program.

1 22. The method of claim 1, wherein the program comprises live television
2 programs, prerecorded television programs, live television commercials,
3 prerecorded television commercials, movies, and pay-per-view
4 programming.

1 23. The method of claim 1, wherein the at least one item comprises at least
2 one product and at least one service.

1 24. The method of claim 1, wherein the coupon information is provided
2 by sponsors of at least one television program and by the program broadcaster.

1 25. The method of claim 1, wherein the at least one item is associated with
2 at least one scene of the program.

1 26. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of controlling
2 presentation of the coupon information using an electronic program guide,
3 wherein the electronic program guide provides programming information
4 for a plurality of broadcasting stations.

1 27. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of providing
2 electronic links to at least one manufacturer and at least one dealer of the at
3 least one item using the coupon information, wherein the electronic links
4 comprise links to Web pages and electronic catalogs.

1 28. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of storing the
2 coupon information for the at least one item used throughout the program
3 for a prespecified period of time after the program ends, wherein the viewer
4 can recall the information during the prespecified period of time.

1 29. The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

2 providing advertising information for the at least one item, wherein
3 the at least one item is associated with at least one scene of a program;
4 receiving the advertising information along with the broadcast of the
5 program;
6 alerting a viewer when the advertising information is available for the
7 at least one item of the at least one scene; and
8 displaying the advertising information on a display along with the
9 broadcast of the program.

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1 30. A broadcasting system comprising:
2 a processor coupled to a display device, the processor capable of
3 controlling the system to provide electronic coupons by,
4 receiving coupon information for at least one item along with a
5 broadcast of a program;
6 enabling selection of one of a plurality of display modes,
7 wherein the plurality of display modes comprises a coupon mode;
8 alerting a viewer when the coupon information is available in
9 the coupon mode; and
10 displaying the coupon information on a display along with the
11 broadcast of a program.

1 31. The system of claim 30, further comprising a display device coupled to
2 the processor.

1 32. The system of claim 30, wherein the program comprises live television
2 programs, prerecorded television programs, live television commercials,
3 prerecorded television commercials, movies, and pay-per-view
4 programming.

1 33. The system of claim 30, wherein the processor is further capable of
2 controlling the system to provide electronic coupons by:
3 providing the coupon information on at least one smart card;
4 providing the at least one smart card to a viewer;
5 synchronizing the coupon information with the broadcast of a program
6 upon receipt of the broadcast of a program.

1 34. The system of claim 30, wherein the broadcast of a program is provided
2 using a high-definition television system.

1 35. The system of claim 30, wherein the processor is configured to control
2 the system to alert the viewer by providing at least one alert to the viewer
3 when at least one coupon is available, wherein the at least one alert
4 comprises a tone and at least one displayed mark.

1 36. The system of claim 35, wherein the at least one displayed mark is
2 superimposed over the broadcast of a program on the display, wherein the at

3 least one displayed mark comprises a coupon indicator for each coupon
4 available.

1 37. The system of claim 30, wherein the processor is further configured to
2 control the system to request the coupon information, wherein the request
3 comprises selecting a coupon indicator corresponding to an item in which the
4 viewer is interested, wherein selecting the coupon indicator results in the
5 display of detailed coupon information.

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1 38. The system of claim 30, wherein the processor is further configured to
2 control the system to:
3 providing coupon information for the at least one item;
4 store selected coupon data on a removable recording medium; and
5 store data corresponding to the television program on the removable
6 recording medium, wherein the data corresponding to the television
7 program comprises a program title, a program description, a date of airing, a
8 time of airing, and a channel of airing.

1 39. The system of claim 38, wherein the coupon data comprises the data
2 corresponding to the program.

1 40. The system of claim 38, wherein the processor is further configured to
2 control the system to:

3 read the coupon information from the removable recording medium;
4 read the data corresponding to the program from the removable
5 recording medium; and
6 transfer the data corresponding to the program to a collection center for
7 statistical programming data.

1 41. The system of claim 38, wherein the processor is further configured to
2 control the system to determine whether at least one condition is satisfied
3 prior to storing selected coupon data on a removable recording medium.

1 42. The system of claim 40, wherein the processor is further configured to
2 control the system to determine whether the at least one condition is satisfied
3 before allowing the reading of the coupon information.

1 43. The system of claim 30, wherein displaying comprises superimposing
2 the coupon information over the program data on the display.

1 44. The system of claim 30, wherein the coupon information is received
2 simultaneously with the program.

1 45. The system of claim 30, wherein the at least one item is associated with
2 at least one scene of the program.

1 46. The system of claim 30, wherein the processor is further configured to
2 control the system to present the coupon information using an electronic
3 program guide, wherein the electronic program guide provides programming
4 information for a plurality of broadcasting stations.

1 47. The system of claim 30, wherein the processor is further configured to
2 control the system to provide at least one electronic link to at least one
3 manufacturer and at least one dealer of the at least one item using the coupon
4 information, wherein the electronic links comprise links to Web pages and
5 electronic catalogs.

1 48. The system of claim 30, wherein the processor is further configured to
2 control the system to store the coupon information for the at least one item
3 used throughout the program for a prespecified period of time after the
4 program ends, wherein the viewer can recall the information during the
5 prespecified period of time.

1 49. The broadcasting system of claim 30, wherein the processor is further
2 configured to control the system to:
3 provide advertising information for the at least one item, wherein the
4 at least one item is associated with at least one scene of a program;
5 receive the advertising information along with the broadcast of the
6 program;

7 alert a viewer when the advertising information is available for the at
8 least one item of the at least one scene; and
9 display the advertising information on a display along with the
10 broadcast of the program.

Sub B³ 1 50. A computer readable medium containing executable instructions
2 which, when executed in a processing system, causes the system to perform a
3 method for providing electronic coupons, the method comprising the steps
4 of:

5 receiving coupon information for at least one item along with a
6 broadcast of a program;

7 enabling selection of one of a plurality of display modes, wherein the
8 plurality of display modes comprises a coupon mode;

9 alerting a viewer when the coupon information is available in the
10 coupon mode when the coupon mode is selected; and

11 displaying the coupon information on a display along with the
12 broadcast of a program.

1 51. The computer readable medium of claim 50, wherein the method
2 further comprises the steps of:

3 providing the broadcast of a program;

4 providing the coupon information for the at least one item;

5 transmitting the coupon information along with the program data; and

6 storing the received coupon information.

Sub A3/1 52. The computer readable medium of claim 51, wherein the method
2 further comprises the steps of:
3 providing the coupon information on at least one smart card;
4 providing the at least one smart card to a viewer;
5 synchronizing the coupon information with the broadcast of a program
6 upon receipt of the broadcast of a program.

1 53. The computer readable medium of claim 50, wherein the step of
2 alerting comprises providing at least one alert to a viewer when at least one
3 coupon is available, wherein the at least one alert comprises a tone and at
4 least one displayed mark.

1 54. The computer readable medium of claim 53, wherein the at least one
2 displayed mark is superimposed over the broadcast of a program on the
3 display, wherein the at least one displayed mark comprises a coupon indicator
4 for each coupon available.

1 55. The computer readable medium of claim 50, wherein the method
2 further comprises the step of requesting the coupon information, wherein the
3 step of requesting comprises selecting a coupon indicator corresponding to an

4 item in which the viewer is interested, wherein selecting the coupon
5 indicator results in the display of detailed coupon information.

1 56. The computer readable medium of claim 50, wherein the method
2 further comprises the steps of:
3 storing selected coupon data on a removable recording medium; and
4 storing data corresponding to the television program on the removable
5 recording medium, wherein the data corresponding to the program
6 comprises a program title, a program description, a date of airing, a time of
7 airing, and a channel of airing.

1 57. The computer readable medium of claim 56, wherein the method
2 further comprises the steps of:
3 reading the coupon information from the removable recording
4 medium;
5 reading the data corresponding to the program from the removable
6 recording medium; and
7 transferring the data corresponding to the program to a collection
8 center for statistical television data.

1 58. The computer readable medium of claim 56, wherein the method
2 further comprises the step of satisfying at least one condition prior to storing
3 selected coupon data on a removable recording medium.

1 59. The computer readable medium of claim 57, wherein the method
2 further comprises the step of determining whether the at least one condition
3 is satisfied before allowing the reading of the coupon information.

1 60. The computer readable medium of claim 50, further comprising the
2 step of controlling presentation of the coupon information using an
3 electronic program guide, wherein the electronic program guide provides
4 programming information for a plurality of broadcasting stations.

1 61. The computer readable medium of claim 50, further comprising the
2 step of providing electronic links to at least one manufacturer and at least one
3 dealer of the at least one item using the coupon information, wherein the
4 electronic links comprise links to Web pages and electronic catalogs.

1 62. The computer readable medium of claim 50, further comprising the
2 step of storing the coupon information for the at least one item used
3 throughout the program for a prespecified period of time after the program
4 ends, wherein the viewer can recall the information during the prespecified
5 period of time.

1 63. The computer readable medium of claim 50, wherein the step of
2 displaying comprises superimposing the coupon information over the
3 program data on the display.

1 64. The computer readable medium of claim 50, wherein the program
2 comprises live television programs, prerecorded television programs, live
3 television commercials, prerecorded television commercials, movies, and
4 pay-per-view programming.

1 65. The computer readable medium of claim 50, wherein the at least one
2 item is associated with at least one scene of the program.

1 66. The computer readable medium of claim 50, wherein the method
2 further comprises the steps of:
3 providing advertising information for the at least one item, wherein
4 the at least one item is associated with at least one scene of a program;
5 receiving the advertising information along with the broadcast of the
6 program;
7 alerting a viewer when the advertising information is available for the
8 at least one item of the at least one scene; and
9 displaying the advertising information on a display along with the
10 broadcast of a program.

1 67. The computer readable medium of claim 50, wherein the method
2 further comprises the steps of:
3 providing the coupon information on at least one smart card;
4 providing the at least one smart card to a viewer;
5 synchronizing the coupon information with the broadcast of a program
6 upon receipt of the broadcast of a program.

1 68. The computer readable medium of claim 50, wherein the broadcast of a
2 program is provided using a high-definition television system.

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1 69. A method for providing electronic coupons, comprising the steps of:
2 receiving coupon information for at least one item;
3 transmitting coupon information for at least one item along with a
4 broadcast of a program; and
5 displaying the coupon information on a display along with the
6 ~~broadcast of a program.~~

1 70. The method of claim 69, further comprising the steps of:
2 providing an alert to the viewer, wherein the viewer is alerted when
3 the coupon information is available in the coupon mode;
4 synchronizing the coupon information with the display of a
5 corresponding at least one item during the broadcast of a program; and

6 enabling selection of one of a plurality of display modes, wherein the
7 plurality of display modes comprises a coupon mode.

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1 71. The method of claim 70, wherein the plurality of display modes further
2 comprises a non-coupon mode and a stored coupon mode.

1 72. The method of claim 70, wherein the step of providing an alert
2 comprises providing at least one alert to a viewer when at least one coupon is
3 available, wherein the at least one alert comprises a tone and at least one
4 displayed mark.

1 73. The method of claim 72, wherein the at least one displayed mark is
2 superimposed over the broadcast of a program on the display, wherein the at
3 least one displayed mark comprises a coupon indicator for each coupon
4 available.

1 74. The method of claim 69, further comprising the step of enabling a
2 request for the coupon information, wherein enabling a request comprises
3 selecting a coupon indicator corresponding to an item in which the viewer is
4 interested, wherein selecting the coupon indicator results in the display of
5 detailed coupon information.

1 75. The method of claim 69, wherein the step of displaying comprises
2 superimposing the coupon information over the program data on the
3 display.

1 76. The method of claim 69, wherein the step of displaying comprises
2 displaying the coupon information on a portion of the display, wherein the
3 portion of the display is selectable by a viewer.

1 77. The method of claim 69, wherein the coupon information is
2 transmitted simultaneously with the broadcast of a program.

1 78. The method of claim 69, wherein the coupon information is
2 transmitted prior to the broadcast of a program.

1 79. The method of claim 69, further comprising the step of transmitting
2 timing data that links the coupon information to the corresponding program.

1 80. The method of claim 69, wherein the program comprises live
2 television programs, prerecorded television programs, live television
3 commercials, prerecorded television commercials, movies, and pay-per-view
4 programming.

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1 81. A computer readable medium containing executable instructions
2 which, when executed in a processing system, causes the system to perform
3 the steps of a method for providing electronic coupons, the method
4 comprising the steps of:
5 receiving coupon information for at least one item;
6 transmitting coupon information for at least one item along with a
7 broadcast of a program; and
8 displaying the coupon information on a display along with the
9 ~~broadcast of a program.~~

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1 82. The method of claim 81, wherein the method further comprises the
2 steps of:
3 providing an alert to the viewer, wherein the viewer is alerted when
4 the coupon information is available in the coupon mode;
5 synchronizing the coupon information with the display of a
6 corresponding at least one item during the broadcast of a program; and
7 enabling selection of one of a plurality of display modes, wherein the
8 plurality of display modes comprises a coupon mode.

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1 83. The method of claim 82, wherein the plurality of display modes further
2 comprises a non-coupon mode and a stored coupon mode.

1 84. The method of claim 82, wherein the step of providing an alert
2 comprises providing at least one alert to a viewer when at least one coupon is
3 available, wherein the at least one alert comprises a tone and at least one
4 displayed mark.

1 85. The method of claim 84, wherein the at least one displayed mark is
2 superimposed over the broadcast of a program on the display, wherein the at
3 least one displayed mark comprises a coupon indicator for each coupon
4 available.

1 86. The method of claim 81, wherein the method further comprises the
2 step of enabling a request for the coupon information, wherein enabling a
3 request comprises selecting a coupon indicator corresponding to an item in
4 which the viewer is interested, wherein selecting the coupon indicator results
5 in the display of detailed coupon information.

1 87. The method of claim 81, wherein the step of displaying comprises
2 superimposing the coupon information over the program data on the
3 display.

1 88. The method of claim 81, wherein the step of displaying comprises
2 displaying the coupon information on a portion of the display, wherein the
3 portion of the display is selectable by a viewer.

1 89. The method of claim 81, wherein the coupon information is
2 transmitted simultaneously with the broadcast of a program.

1 90. The method of claim 81, wherein the coupon information is
2 transmitted prior to the broadcast of a program.

1 91. The method of claim 81, wherein the method further comprises the
2 step of transmitting timing data that links the coupon information to the
3 corresponding program.

1 92. The method of claim 81, wherein the program comprises live
2 television programs, prerecorded television programs, live television
3 commercials, prerecorded television commercials, movies, and pay-per-view
4 programming.

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